

In the Claims

Cancel claims 55 and 85, and amend claims 59 and 87 as indicated below:

55 (cancelled).

56 (previously amended). A gasket for providing a seal at the joint between a pair of pipe flanges for connecting one flange to the other, comprising:

a first strip of a material that is adapted for sealing which is formed in a loop and has an outer periphery;

a second strip of said sealing material formed in a loop and having an inner periphery that is greater than the outer periphery of said first strip; and

at least one spoke of said sealing material extending between said first strip and said second strip, wherein the outer periphery of said second strip includes a concave notch adapted for receiving a thickness gauge.

57 (previously added). The gasket of claim 56, wherein the outer periphery of said second strip also includes, adjacent said notch, a corresponding convexity adapted for substantially maintaining the strength of said second strip at the location of said notch.

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FI 58 (previously added). The gasket of claim 56, further comprising a reinforcement spoke extending between said first strip and said second strip and connecting to said second strip proximate the location of said notch.

59 (amended). [The gasket of claim 55,] A gasket for providing a seal at the joint between a pair of pipe flanges for connecting one flange to the other, comprising:

a first strip of a material that is adapted for sealing and formed in a loop and having an outer periphery;

a second strip of said sealing material formed in a loop and having an inner periphery that is greater than the outer periphery of said first strip; and

at least one spoke of said sealing material extending between said first strip and said second strip wherein remaining spaces therebetween are substantially void,
wherein said first and said second strips have corresponding inner peripheries,
the gasket further comprising a third strip of said sealing material formed in a loop, said third strip having an outer periphery that is less than the inner periphery of said first strip, and at least one inner spoke of said sealing material extending between said third strip and said first strip.

60 (previously amended). A gasket for providing a seal at the joint between a pair of pipe flanges for connecting one flange to the other, comprising:

a first strip of a material that is adapted for sealing which is formed in a loop has as an outer periphery;

a second strip of said sealing material formed in a loop and having an inner periphery that is greater than the outer periphery of said first strip; and

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at least one spoke of said sealing material extending between said first strip and said second strip, the gasket further comprising an open alignment spoke of said sealing material extending outwardly from said second strip, said open alignment spoke defining an alignment concavity for placement adjacent a fastener.

61 (previously added). The gasket of claim 60, further comprising a centering shelf of said sealing material depending from said open alignment spoke and extending so as to be substantially congruent with the outer periphery of at least one of the flanges.

62 (previously added). The gasket of claim 61, wherein the flanges have corresponding inner and outer peripheries, wherein the outer periphery of one of the flanges is smaller than the outer periphery of the other of the flanges, wherein the outer periphery of said second strip is substantially congruent with the outer periphery of the smaller flange, and wherein said centering shelf extends so as to be substantially congruent with the outer periphery of the larger flange.

63 (previously added). A gasket for providing a seal at the joint between a pair of pipe flanges for connecting one flange to the other, comprising:

a first strip of a material that is adapted for sealing which is formed in a loop and has an outer periphery;

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a second strip of said sealing material formed in a loop and having an inner periphery that is greater than the outer periphery of said first strip; and

at least one spoke of said sealing material extending between said first strip and said second strip, further comprising an open alignment spoke of said sealing material extending outwardly from said second strip, said open alignment spoke defining an alignment concavity for placement adjacent a fastener, and wherein the outer periphery of said second strip includes a concave notch adapted for receiving a thickness gauge.

64 (previously added). The gasket of claim 63, wherein the outer periphery of said second strip also includes, adjacent said notch, a corresponding convexity adapted for substantially maintaining the strength of said second strip at the location of said notch.

65 (previously added). The gasket of claim 63, further comprising a reinforcement spoke extending between said first strip and said second strip and connecting to said second strip proximate the location of said notch.

66 (previously amended). The gasket of claim 60, wherein said first and said second strips have corresponding inner peripheries, the gasket further comprising a third strip of said sealing material formed in a loop, said third strip having an outer periphery that is less than the inner periphery of said first strip, and at least one inner spoke of said sealing material extending between said third strip and said first strip.

67 (previously amended). A gasket for providing a seal at the joint between a pair of pipe flanges for connecting one flange to the other, comprising:

a first strip of a material that is adapted for sealing which is formed in a loop and has an outer periphery;

a second strip of said sealing material formed in a loop and having an inner periphery that is greater than the outer periphery of said first strip; and

at least one spoke of said sealing material extending between said first strip and said second strip, the gasket further comprising a closed alignment spoke of said sealing material extending outwardly from said second strip, wherein said closed alignment spoke includes an aperture therethrough for receiving a bolt.

68 (previously added). The gasket of claim 67, further comprising a centering shelf of said sealing material depending from said closed alignment spoke and extending so as to be substantially congruent with the outer periphery of at least one of the flanges.

69 (previously added). The gasket of claim 68, wherein the flanges have corresponding inner and outer peripheries, wherein the outer periphery of one of the flanges is smaller than the outer periphery of the other of the flanges, wherein the outer periphery of said second strip is substantially congruent with the outer periphery of the smaller flange, and wherein said centering shelf extends so as to be substantially congruent with the outer periphery of the larger flange.

70 (previously amended). A gasket for providing a seal at the joint between a pair of pipe flanges for connecting one flange to the other, comprising:

a first strip of a material that is adapted for sealing which is formed in loop and has an outer periphery;

a second strip of said sealing material formed in a loop and having an inner periphery that is greater than the outer periphery of said first strip; and

at least one spoke of said sealing material extending between said first strip and said second strip, further comprising a closed alignment spoke of said sealing material extending outwardly from said second strip, wherein said closed alignment spoke includes an aperture therethrough for receiving a bolt, and wherein the outer periphery of said second strip includes a concave notch adapted for receiving a thickness gauge.

71 (previously added). The gasket of claim 70, wherein the outer periphery of said second strip also includes, adjacent said notch, a corresponding convexity adapted for substantially maintaining the strength of said second strip at the location of said notch.

72 (previously added). The gasket of claim 70, further comprising a reinforcement spoke extending between said first strip and said second strip and connecting to said second strip proximate the location of said notch.

73 (previously amended). The gasket of claim 67, wherein said first and said second strips have corresponding inner peripheries, the gasket further comprising a third strip of said sealing material formed in a loop, said third strip having an outer periphery that is less than the inner periphery of said first strip, and at least one inner spoke of said sealing material extending between said third strip and said first strip.

74 (previously added). The gasket of claim 67, wherein said closed alignment spoke has a tab portion that extends beyond the outer peripheries of the flanges.

75 (previously added). The gasket of claim 74, wherein said tab portion includes identification data.

76 (previously added). The gasket of claim 60, further comprising a closed alignment spoke of said sealing material extending outwardly from said second strip, wherein said closed alignment spoke includes an aperture therethrough for receiving a bolt.

77 (previously added). The gasket of claim 76, further comprising a centering shelf of said sealing material depending from at least one of said closed alignment spoke and said open alignment spoke and extending so as to be substantially congruent with the outer periphery of at least one of the flanges.

78 (previously added). The gasket of claim 77, wherein the flanges have corresponding inner and outer peripheries, wherein the outer periphery of one of the flanges is smaller than the outer periphery of the other of the flanges, wherein the outer periphery of said second strip is substantially congruent with the outer periphery of the smaller flange, and wherein said centering shelf extends so as to be substantially congruent with the outer periphery of the larger flange.

79 (previously amended). A gasket for providing a seal at the joint between a pair of pipe flanges for connecting one flange to the other, comprising:

a first strip of a material that is adapted for sealing which is formed in a loop and
has an outer periphery;

a second strip of said sealing material formed in a loop and having an inner
periphery that is greater than the outer periphery of said first strip; and

at least one spoke of said sealing material extending between said first strip and said
second strip, further comprising an open alignment spoke of said sealing

material extending outwardly from said second strip, said open alignment spoke defining an alignment concavity for placement adjacent a fastener, further comprising a closed alignment spoke of said sealing material extending outwardly from said second strip, wherein said closed alignment spoke includes an aperture therethrough for receiving a bolt, and wherein the outer periphery of said second strip includes a concave notch adapted for receiving a thickness gauge.

80 (previously added). The gasket of claim 79, wherein the outer periphery of said second strip also includes, adjacent said notch, a corresponding convexity adapted for substantially maintaining the strength of said second strip at the location of said notch.

81 (previously added). The gasket of claim 79, further comprising a reinforcement spoke extending between said first strip and said second strip and connecting to said second strip proximate the location of said notch.

82 (previously amended). The gasket of claim 76, wherein said first and said second strips have corresponding inner peripheries, the gasket further comprising a third strip of said sealing material formed in a loop, said third strip having an outer periphery that is less than the inner periphery of said first strip, and at least one inner spoke of said sealing material extending between said third strip and said first strip.

83 (previously added). The gasket of claim 76, wherein said closed alignment spoke has a tab portion that extends beyond the outer peripheries of the flanges.

84 (previously added). The gasket of claim 83, wherein said tab portion includes identification data.

85 (cancelled).

86 (previously amended). A gasket for providing a seal at the joint between a pair of pipe flanges for connecting one flange to the other, comprising:

a first strip of a material adapted for sealing which is formed in a loop and has an outer periphery;

a second strip of said sealing material formed in a loop and having an outer periphery and an inner periphery greater than said outer periphery of said first strip; and

at least one spoke of said sealing material extending between said first strip and said second strip, and wherein said outer periphery of said first strip is substantially circular and said outer periphery of said second strip is substantially square, wherein said outer periphery of said second strip defines a concavity at a respective corner thereof.

87 (amended). [The gasket of claim 85,] A gasket for providing a seal at the joint between a pair of pipe flanges for connecting one flange to the other, comprising:

a first strip of sealing material adapted for sealing and formed in a loop and having an outer periphery;

a second strip of said sealing material formed in a loop and having an outer periphery and an inner periphery greater than said outer periphery of said first strip; and

at least one spoke of said sealing material extending between said first strip and said second strip, further comprising at least one closed alignment spoke of said sealing material extending outwardly from said second strip, said alignment spoke including an aperture therethrough for receiving a bolt.

88 (previously amended). A gasket for providing a seal at the joint between a pair of pipe flanges for connecting one flange to the other, each flange having an inner periphery and an outer periphery, comprising a single ring of sealing material having an outer periphery that is substantially congruent with the outer periphery of at least one of the flanges and including a concave notch adapted for receiving a thickness gauge.

89 (previously added). The gasket of claim 88, wherein the outer periphery of one of the flanges is greater than the outer periphery of the other of the flanges, and wherein said outer periphery of said sealing material is less than the outer periphery of the one of the flanges that has the greatest outer periphery.

90 (previously added). The gasket of claim 89, wherein said sealing material includes an aperture therethrough for receiving a respective bolt.

91 (previously amended). A gasket for providing a seal at the joint between a pair of pipe flanges for connecting one flange to the other, each flange having an inner periphery and an outer periphery, comprising:

a first strip of a material adapted for sealing and formed in a loop, said first strip has an outer periphery;

a second strip of said sealing material formed in a loop, said second strip having an outer periphery and an inner periphery greater than the outer periphery of said first strip; and

at least one spoke of said sealing material extending between said first strip and said second strip at a predetermined location on the inner periphery of said

second strip, wherein the outer periphery of said second strip includes a concave notch adapted for receiving a thickness gauge, said notch being disposed proximate said predetermined location.

92 (previously amended). A gasket for providing a seal at the joint between a pair of pipe flanges for connecting one flange to the other, each flange having an inner periphery and an outer periphery, comprising:

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a first strip of a material adapted for sealing and formed in a loop, said first strip having an outer periphery;

a second strip of said sealing material formed in a loop, said second strip having an outer periphery and an inner periphery greater than the outer periphery of said first strip; and

at least one spoke of said sealing material extending between said first strip and said second strip, wherein the outer periphery of said second strip includes a concave notch adapted for receiving a thickness gauge, and wherein the outer periphery of said second strip also includes, opposite said notch, a corresponding convexity adapted for substantially maintaining the strength of said second strip at the location of said notch.